

## From Father Nik

America independence from England went hand-in-hand with the disestablishment of the Episcopal Church in the states where it had been supported by the colonial government. So, as Samuel Seabury from Connecticut was seeking ordination as a bishop in Scotland & William White was working to organize a General Convention from Pennsylvania, the Episcopal Church in New York, Virginia, the Carolinas, & Georgia was learning, for the first time, how to be a voluntary & self-sufficient institution. This lesson was not necessarily as difficult in all of those states as it was in Virginia; however, the Diocese of VA was—as it still is—the largest Episcopal diocese in the United States. Virginia's struggles were bound to have an impact on the rest of the Episcopal Church at a time when it was just learning to stand on its own two feet.

Disestablishment in 1786, followed by the Glebe Act of 1802, left the Episcopal Church in VA devastated. Even before disestablishment, the Church had faced some competition from Presbyterians & Baptists. Historic Polegreen Church in Mechanicsville was one of four dissenting “Reading Houses”—that is, Presbyterian churches—approved by the VA Governor's Council in 1743. Still, the Episcopal Church of colonial VA could rest secure in the legal & financial support of establishment, as well as the religious inertia of its parishioners engendered by that establishment. However, once establishment was lost, the Church floundered, unprepared for the work of evangelism necessary to keep from losing members to the Presbyterians, Baptists, or secular diversions. This situation became even more desperate in 1784 when the small group, revival movement known as the Methodists broke from the Episcopal Church—taking many of the most religiously enthusiastic Episcopalians with them.

In 1790, Virginia's first bishop, James Madison (cousin of the President who bore the same name), was consecrated at Canterbury Cathedral and returned to a Commonwealth in ascendancy & a Church in decline. In addition to his Episcopal office, Bishop Madison was a professor, the president of William & Mary College, & served James City Parish as rector. Stretched so thin, Madison was in no position to turn the tide of apathy within the Episcopal Church of VA or battle the open hostility towards it from without. It's nearly a miracle, and undoubtedly providence, that the Episcopal Church didn't become a mostly forgotten footnote in the early history of the Old Dominion. And it might have been so if not for the Episcopal women of VA who continued to teach their children from the catechism of the Prayer Book & regularly say Morning & Evening Prayer with their families. For as the Church has always known, but often forgets, the day-to-day cultivation & practice of Christian faith in the home is as crucial for the life of the Church as Sunday worship. *Nik+*

## FORK CHURCH IN THE NEWS

*Fork Full*, the Fork Church cookbook, was featured in the Food & Drink section of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* on Tuesday, July 21. You can read the article by Holly Prestidge at [www.richmond.com](http://www.richmond.com)



### **Lemonade on the Lawn**

Thanks to Boo & Jim Smythe for this morning's refreshments!  
Barbara Woods will host next week's coffee hour.

### **Bishop Spong Discussion Group**

Ruth Syman-May & Janet Taylor are meeting to listen to and discuss the 2015 Lenten Series presented by Bishop Jack Spong.

At St. James the Less. All are welcome!

Please contact Ruth at 804-240-8511 with any questions.

### **Eucharistic Ministers, Visitors, & Acolytes**

If you're interested in being a Lay Eucharistic minister, Pastoral Visitor, or Acolyte, please let Fr. Nik know – [KnicholasForti@gmail.com](mailto:KnicholasForti@gmail.com)

# **Christian Education**

*... is Taking a Break for the Summer.*

## **Godly Play needs volunteers this summer for:**

- sorting & cleaning Nursery toys & equipment;
- helping with special summer events during the first part of church on Sundays from June 14 until August 16;
- reorganizing the Godly Play stories & the supply closet.

Please call Boo Smythe at 804-357-3319 if you can help.

**J2A Youth Group** will meet again in September, **but stay tuned for occasional summer events.**

**The Adult Forum** will meet again on Sunday, September 13.

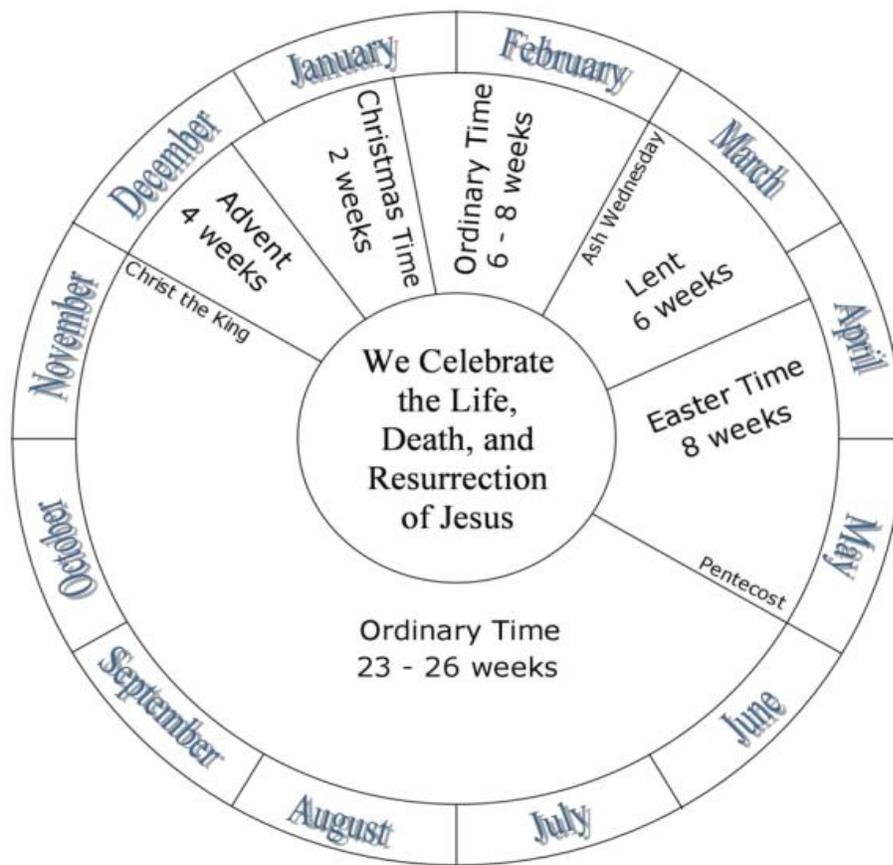
## **Small Groups**

**The Women's Book Group** will meet again in September. They are reading *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle over the summer. Please contact Kathy for directions or more info: [boysthree@embarqmail.com](mailto:boysthree@embarqmail.com)

**The Men's Book Group** will meet Thursday, August 6 at 7:30am at the Caboose in Ashland to discuss Book 3, chapters 12 thru 16 (pages 181-225) of *Killing Jesus: A History* by Bill O'Reilly & Martin Dugard.

## **Christian Formation**

If you're interested in being Baptized or would like to become a member of this Church, please contact Fr Nik – [KNicholasForti@gmail.com](mailto:KNicholasForti@gmail.com)



## Nik's Calendar

Thursday, July 23 – Building Use Guidelines Committee, 7pm

Friday, July 24 – Marriage Prep with Couple, 7-9pm

Monday, July 27 – Meeting with Fr. Bishong, 10:30am

Tuesday, July 28 – Website meeting, 11am

Friday, August 7 – Young Rector's Group, 10am

– Smith-Polat Rehearsal, 6pm

Saturday, August 8 – Smith-Polat Blessing of Marriage, 6pm (reception to follow)

## Looking Ahead

Tuesday, July 28 – Vestry Meeting, 7-9pm

Thursday, August 6 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am

**Office hours:** Jacquie Alleva, our parish secretary, works Tuesday & Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. If you would like to submit an announcement, please do so by noon on Thursday.